

the Epithet Romantic.

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occasional gleam of pure sunlight, all vanishing away, the mental like this natural imagery, when its hour is up, without leaving anything behind but the wish to recover the vision. And yet, the while, this series of visions may be mistaken for operations of thought, and each cloudy image be admitted in the place of a proposition or a reason ; or it may even be mistaken for something sublimer than thinking. The influence of this habit of dwelling on the beautiful fallacious forms of imagination, will accompany the mind into the most serious speculations, or rather musings, on the real world, and what is to be done in it, and expected; as the image from looking at any dazzling object still appears before the eye wherever it turns. The vulgar materials that constitute the actual economy of the world, will rise up to sight in fictitious forms, which the mind cannot disenchant into plain reality; which indeed it may hardly suspect of being illusory ; and would not be very desirous to reduce to the proof if it did. For such a mind is not disposed to examine, with any severity of inspection, the real condition of things. It is content with ignorance, because environed with something far more delicious than such knowledge, in the paradise which imagination creates. In that paradise it walks delighted, till some imperious circumstance of real life call it thence, and gladly escapes thither again as soon as the cause of the avocation can be got rid of. There, everything is beautiful and noble as could be desired to form the residence of angels. If a tenth part of the felicities that have been enjoyed, the great actions that have been performed, the beneficent institutions that have been established, and the beautiful objects that have been seen, in that happy region, could have been imported into this terrestrial place what a delightful thing, my dear friend, it would have been each morning to awake and look on such a world once more* It is not strange that a faculty, of which the exercise is so tiasy and bewitching, and the scope infinite, should obtain a predominance over judgment, especially in young persons* and in such as may have been brought up, like Rasselas and his companions, in great seclusion from the sight and experience of the world. Indeed, a considerable vigour of imagination, though it be at the expense of a frequent predominance over juvenile understanding, seems necessary, in •early life, to cause

a generous expansion of the passions, by